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Period 3

1950s – Marilyn Monroe

On June 1st of 1926 a girl was born that would never be forgotten. She grew to jump from foster home to foster home but she matured to be one of the greatest actresses, singers, and models the world has ever known. Winning four golden globe awards she became a monument for young girls around the country. Her photograph appeared on the cover of several magazines including the first issue of Playboy. Her success to this day is immeasurable and she was Marilyn Monroe. There were many great actors and actresses in the fifties including James Dean, Marlon Brando, Montgomery Clift, Grace Kelly, and John Wayne but in the minds of many Marilyn stands out.

Marilyn Monroe was not always Marilyn Monroe, in the literal sense .She started out as a foster child going from home to home. When she was sixteen and this pattern was still continuing her mother proposed the idea that her boyfriend, James Dougherty, marry her. And such was done. Soon after their marriage he was shipped off to war and she moved in with his mother. She got a job at an airplane factory when David Conover took a picture of her for an article in Yank magazine. It was also him who suggested she apply to be a part of the Blue Book Modeling Agency, when she was accepted she dyed her hair from brown to blonde since they were looking for light haired models. Largely in part of him not knowing about the modeling, her marriage with Jim ended in 1946. It was after this that Norma Jean Dougherty changed her name and became Marilyn Monroe, starting it all.

She changed her name because when she became one of Blue Books most successful models she was brought to the attention to Ben Lyon, a 20th Century Fox, executive. This brought her to two un-renewed contracts and a few minor unsuccessful movies. After this she returned to modeling but her acting career was brought back to life shortly after by Columbia Pictures. The company did a few slight things to alter Monroe’s appearance including correcting her slight over bite and giving her the platinum blonde locks she is known for. She got an acting coach and an agent and suddenly she became the “Talk of Hollywood.” Everybody was interested in what she was doing, who she dating, and what movie she’d appear in next. This is where her career really hit mainstream. It was in 1953 that she starred in the motion picture *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, one of her most famous movies. She would go on to make eight other movies titled [*Bus Stop*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bus_Stop_(film))*,* [*Don't Bother to Knock*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don%27t_Bother_to_Knock)*,* [*How to Marry a Millionaire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_to_Marry_a_Millionaire)*,* [*River of No Return*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_of_No_Return)*,* [*There’s No Business Like Show Business*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/There%27s_No_Business_Like_Show_Business_(film))*,* [*Monkey Business*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monkey_Business_(1952_film))*, and* [*The Seven Year Itch*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Seven_Year_Itch)*.* It was then that Marilyn felt that she wasn’t casted for her soul but more so for her appearance, and this troubled her more than anyone knew at the time, but her coach scored her a screening for *The Girl in Pink Tights.* She was suspended when she failed to show up for work. From here her career had its ups and its downs. Some loved her some hated her, some idolized her. But regardless of their opinions she won many awards and had many accomplishments in her lifetime.

She won seventeen major awards including four Golden Globes, 4 Photoplay awards, and of course a star on the Hollywood walk of fame. She won French and Italian awards for her performance in *The Prince and the Showgirl.* She was named sweet heart of the month; after all she was on the cover of the very first issue. There are several other awards that she won and countless others that have no name, such as the accomplishment of going to a young foster child to a mainstream actress, singer, and model. A famous quote of Monroe’s reads, “I want to grow old without facelifts. I want to have the courage to be loyal to the face I have made.” Sadly, we’ll never know if she really would have been able to make this happen because she tragically died on August 5, 1962 at 36 years young. There is no doubt that Marilyn Monroe was a legend and that is why she will live on forever with the impact she made on people around the world.